

ARTICLE APPEARED  
ON PAGE A10

THE BALTIMORE SUN  
26 October 1978

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# Turner asks press to reconsider stand on publishing secret data

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Washington—Adm. Stansfield Turner, the director of central intelligence, called on the press yesterday to re-examine its views on publishing secret material and grant intelligence agencies the same need to protect confidential sources as it claims for itself.

"Basically there must be some renewed acknowledgment in the media and in the public that secrecy is legitimate," he told a National Press Club audience. The admiral intimated that allied intelligence agencies were becoming unco-operative out of doubt that the Central Intelligence Agency can keep secrets.

With what appeared as fine irony, Admiral Turner noted that in the matter of protecting sources of information from being revealed, the CIA and the press "are really in the same plight."

He referred to the current tendency of both to find themselves hauled into court and forced to defend the secrecy of their sources. He specifically mentioned the case of the New York Times reporter, Myron A. Farber, just released after 40 days in jail for refusing to give a court his notes on a murder case. And he referred indirectly to the CIA's unwillingness to give secret information in a case involving efforts to prevent the election of Salvador Allende Gossens as president of Chile in 1970.

The public will judge whether the press is right in publishing official secrets, Admiral Turner said.

"The recent court decisions on Farber and such," he said, "may indicate that neither the public nor the courts agree with some of the premises under which you have traditionally labored."

"Your unfettered right to print and to disclose is clearly being questioned, just as has our indiscriminate right to classify."

Both sides, the press and the intelligence agencies, are "in the midst of a reassessment" of their roles and how they carry them out, Admiral Turner said. He suggested the information media could learn something from the government's experience in tightening its intelligence operations and installing various forms of oversight.

Without prescribing press solutions, he said he expected, as the "country's chief intelligence officer," that the press would show "greater understanding of the commonality of our problem of protecting sources."

He played heavily on this theme throughout his speech. After an allusion to the Farber case at one point, he stressed what he saw as a difference in press and CIA obligations, however.

"Your case rests upon an interpretation of the Constitution with reference to the First Amendment which today is being seriously challenged," the admiral said.

His obligation, however, rests on law, the mandate of the 1947 National Security Act to protect sources and methods of collecting intelligence from unauthorized disclosure.

Admiral Turner said the danger of disclosing sources is "the number one threat" to United States intelligence efforts today.

He said officials suspect some allied intelligence agencies are holding back information because they are losing confidence that it will be protected.

In a recent case, he said, an ally withdrew a proposal for a covert operation which "would have been beneficial to both

nations," when reminded that eight congressional committees would have to be notified.

"They could not imagine that the plan would not leak," he said.

Admiral Turner nevertheless praised, at another point, the congressional oversight apparatus installed after disclosures of CIA excesses in years past.